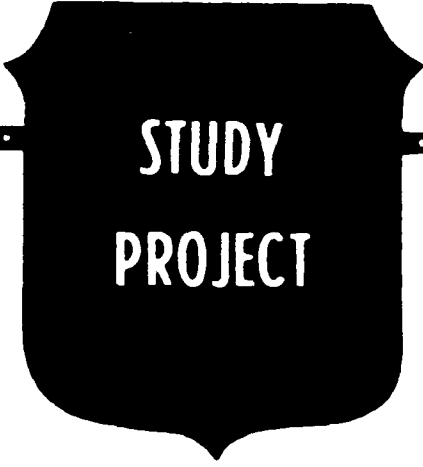


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LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICTS
AND THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

BY

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Our Navy and Marine forces are capable of providing the United States with the flexibility and latitude to affect these conflicts because of their ability to rapidly deploy and be employed. The Marine Air Ground Task Force and its combined arms concept, along with the Navy's sea based support, can project the military force needed to strengthen our foreign policy and interests in the Third World.

ABSTRACT

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number of Third World countries are starting to proliferate their own instruments of military power. Because of their interest in acquiring modern military technology, their capabilities have to be considered a viable threat to any military force, even if encountered in a low-intensity environment. With the development of this kind of world scenario, the United States and its allies could be facing a number of extremely volatile and violent situations. This could also affect world order or the existing balance of power in various ways and to different degrees. It could even include the status quo or nuclear parity that presently exists between the United States and the Soviet Union.

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LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICTS
AND
THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

INTRODUCTION

The United States Marine Corps has the capabilities to influence low-intensity conflicts across the entire operational continuum. It has a long and distinguished history of involvements with numerous small wars and conflicts in the Third World. As part of the naval service it is able to extend and multiply its capabilities because of the additional assets the Navy and its ships offer. Because of their ability to combine forces, the Navy and the Marine Corps are skilled at working within a joint arena. This is extremely beneficial when working with sister and allied services. In addition, the Marine Corps has the ability to bring continuity to the three-in-one force concept of sea, land, and air power. This is done through its Marine Air Ground Task Force which is unique in itself and continually studied by other military services throughout the world. It is a total force in readiness that has the flexibility, mobility, and capability to undertake, as may be directed, any world-wide mission within the low-intensity conflict spectrum.

Ever since the American Revolution, the Marine Corps has been involved in defending United States foreign interests and policies abroad. Whether engulfed in major world wars or intervening in small wars or dirty little conflicts, the Marine Corps has always been a

force ready to answer its nation's Because of its past involvement with small wars and conflicts such as removing Seminole Indians from Florida in 1835, helping to defeat John Brown at Harper's Ferry in 1860, or defending foreign policy in China, Nicaragua, Samoa, Philippines, Cuba, Haiti, or Panama between 1899 and 1920, the Marine Corps decided to publish a manual in 1940 called "Small Wars". It dealt specifically with how Marine Corps units conducted operations in Third World environments, which were at that time called "Small Wars". However, it's relevance was overshadowed by the out-break of World War II.

After the war, the National Security Act of 1947 put the Marine Corps mission into law as follows:

The Marine Corps, within the Department of the Navy, shall be so organized as to include not less than three combat divisions and three air wings, and such other land combat, aviation, and other services as may be organic therein. The Marine Corps shall be organized, trained, and equipped to provide fleet marine forces of combined arms, together with supporting air components, for service with the fleet in the seizure or defense of advanced naval bases and for the conduct of such land operations as may be essential to the prosecution of a naval campaign. In addition, the Marine Corps shall provide detachments and organizations for service on armed vessels of the Navy, shall provide security detachments for the protection of naval property at naval stations and bases, and shall perform such other duties as the President may direct.³

With the enactment of the National Security Act, the Marine Corps continued to perform its mission in the interests of national defense during time of war and crisis.

After the Korean War the Marines were again involved in Third World conflicts. In 1958 they landed in Lebanon to help restore order

for the local government and in 1962 they prepared again to land during the Cuban missile crisis. Then in 1965 when Southeast Asia was getting all the headlines, the Marines were deployed ashore in the Dominican Republic to evacuate foreign nationals and provide forces for the inter-American peacekeeping effort. However, like all the military services, Vietnam was their primary effort for the next ten years. It wasn't until 1975, the fall of Vietnam, that the Marines along with a naval task force were involved in evacuating non-combatants from Vietnam before the communist forces took over the country. Then in 1983 the Marines were again deployed to Lebanon in an effort to help the government restore peace and order to a country torn apart by civil war. But most recently, the Marines were involved in 1983 with Grenada and in 1989 with Panama as part of a joint, Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps, combat force. As part of the joint force their mission was to help protect United States interests and restore democracy to two of her allies in the American hemisphere.⁴

As the past has shown, the United States Marine Corps has a long historical involvement with conflicts in the Third World. Even though the terminology has changed over the years from small wars, guerrilla warfare, dirty little conflicts, to low-intensity conflicts, the Marine Corps has experienced the intensity and violence of them all. It takes them seriously and has the ability to deploy and to be employed rapidly because of the amphibious ships that it shares with the Navy.

As a major component of an amphibious task force, and in conjunction with the Carrier Battle Groups and/or a Battleship Battle Groups, the Navy and Marine Corps make a very capable naval task force. The Navy provides the Marines with the sea base platforms to transport on and launch from, along with the air and naval gun fire systems to support and cover them as they deploy ashore and accomplish their assigned mission(s). As a combined naval force, these two services are particularly suited to rapidly deploy and be employed and influence low-intensity conflicts around the globe.

Task organized, each Marine force is structured to meet the vagaries of the situation. It is built around a combined arms team with integrated aviation and logistical components. This organizational structure exploits the synergy inherent in closely integrated air and ground operations. This "Marine Air Ground Task Force is most effective when employed as a strategically mobile, combined-arms, air-ground-logistics combat force under a single commander." Its ability to come over the horizon from the sea and intervene with a combined force makes it a strong deterrent against Third World struggles and crisis.

As a maritime nation, the United States needs a naval force that is capable of protecting her interests abroad. This means that it has to be able to rapidly support campaigns in ground theaters of operations both directly and indirectly. Since nuclear parity exists between the United States and the Soviet Union, a number of these international threats will probably be generated in the Third World environment and limited to that part of the operational

continuum known as low-intensity conflict. In this continuum a balance must exist among the four elements of national power (political, economical, informational, and military) before peacetime competition can flourish. The MAGTF, in conjunction with a Navy task force, has the capabilities to influence the stability of these elements and to deal with the conflicts that could possibly develop. Their influence can be projected in a cohesive manner through a number of ways to include: forward surveillance, civilian evacuation, sea based quarantine, and power projection.* All these capabilities provide our political and military leaders the maximum latitude to influence a crisis, whether diplomatically or through armed intervention. As long as the United States remains a dominant force in the world, it can expect to be extensively involved in dealing with these types of world wide low-intensity conflicts.

NAVAL TASK FORCE

ORGANIZATION

A Carrier Battle Group, or a Battleship Battle Group, in conjunction with an Amphibious Ready Group are particularly suited to influence low-intensity conflicts around the world. Comprised of Navy and Marine Corps forces, these Naval Task Forces are presently organized around fourteen Carrier Battle Groups, two Battleship Battle Groups, various command and support ships, and three Marine Expeditionary Forces. Their task organization gives them the flexibility to rapidly deploy, employ and sustain a naval-air-ground task force anywhere in the world. Each naval task force is structured to meet the variance of the situation.

The Carrier Battle Group (CBG) provides the task force with protection from airborne, surface, subsurface and shore weapon systems attack. It has the ability to perform its mission(s) in all types of weather conditions. Its capabilities include anti-air warfare, strike, reconnaissance, air, surface and subsurface surveillance, antisubmarine warfare, electronic warfare and logistics. Depending on the threat, size, and mission, more than one CBG can be deployed with a task force.⁷

The Battleship Battle Groups (BBBG): When the Battleships are available, they form the Battleship Battle Group (BBBG) which are comprised of large, heavily armed surface ships. Other than the

battleship, these groups also include cruisers, destroyers, and frigates. They are armed with guns, missiles, torpedoes, and technologically advanced weapon systems. Their mission is to protect the fleet against submarines, aircraft, and surface ships at sea and targets ashore. This is the only artillery the Marines have until they are ashore and have their own artillery batteries set up to support their ground maneuvers.®

The Submarine can be assigned to any of the battle groups but works around the group and is independent of their formations. As a combatant vessel it is probably the most often overlooked but a very capable weapon platform that can be depended upon to support the task force. Its mission is to locate and destroy other submarines, surface combatants, and merchant ships that could harm the fleet or assist the enemy. Their weapon systems include torpedoes and missiles which can be deployed against other surface or land targets.®

The Amphibious Ready Group is dependent upon the two battle groups and the submarine for the protection and security of its ships and sea lanes of communication. It is made up of amphibious assault ships, such as the landing helicopter assault (LHA) ship, landing platform helicopter (LPH) ship, and landing helicopter dock (LHD) ship, which are the Marines Corps' deployment platforms. Each one of these ships are capable of carrying the smallest Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF), a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), and its air contingency and support personnel. They are extremely versatile ships, that provide "a superb means of ship-to-shore movement by helicopter in augmentation of movement of other troops and equipment

by landing craft. They have extensive storage capacity for vehicles, palletized stores, and aviation and vehicle fuel. They also can accommodate four landing craft utility."¹⁰ This dual role of carrying landing craft and aircraft enable the Marines to embark and debark rapidly in a time of crisis. ¹¹

Maritime Prepositioned Ships (MPS) provide the Marine Air Ground Task Force the capability to pre-load their equipment and supplies. It enables them to rapidly deploy to any location in the world for employment as may be directed. Presently, there are thirteen of these ships that are formed into three MPS squadrons. Their mission is to be positioned in strategic locations around the world so that they can respond to the needs of a rapidly deployed MAGTF. They are capable of off-loading at a pier or from offshore. This prepositioning concept and the unique capabilities of these Navy ships have decreased the MAGTF' response time to rapidly mobilize and employ anywhere there is a conflicting situation developing.¹²

This highly versatile joint naval capability that the Navy and the Marine Corps have can be extremely effective and efficient in affecting Third World environments when a crisis or a conflict erupts. It gives the United States the force projection it needs and the mobility to influence a conflict when the demand arises.

MARINE AIR GROUND TASK FORCE

(MAGTF)

The Marine Corps primary role, by law, is to provide landing forces for amphibious warfare and to develop doctrine, tactics, and equipment to support that mission. In addition, it is responsible for carrying out other duties as may be directed by the President. In preparing to perform such missions, it has developed the combined arms concept. This method integrates the air, ground, logistics, and command and control assets under a single commander. With these assets under his control, the commander has a balanced force, which is called a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF).¹³

The concept of a Marine air, ground, and logistics element under a single commander was first used in the Pacific theater by the Navy and the Marine Corps during World War II.¹⁴ The term "Marine Air Ground Task Forces" was introduced during the Korean War when the Marines' were attacking southward out of the Chosin Reservoir. General S.L.A. Marshall did an excellent job of summing up this concept and the Marines use of it in Korea: "No other operation in the American book of war quite compares with this show by the 1st Marine Division in the perfection of tactical concepts by leadership at all levels, and in promptness of utilization of all supporting forces."¹⁵ Because of this success the Marine Corps again adopted this concept for the Vietnam War. Since that time the MAGTF concept has become the doctrinal way for Marines to deploy and fight.

In its correct form the MAGTF stands as a balanced air-ground team of combined arms and service support. By nature it is capable of rapid deployment, and is

sufficiently and independently sustainable for performance of a broad range of missions across the spectrum of conflict situations. This characteristic sustainability, along with mobility, organizational flexibility, and high combat power, provides the MAGTF with a means of performing its traditional expeditionary mission, as well as sustained land operations when necessary.¹⁶

COMPONENTS

All MAGTFs, regardless of size, will deploy with the four major elements: command and control, ground combat, aviation combat, and combat service support. The following describes the composition of each one of the four major elements:

Command Element (CE) provides single headquarters for command and coordination of ground, aviation, and combat service support elements.¹⁷

Ground Combat Element (GCE) may range in size from one infantry battalion to one or more divisions. It may include artillery, tank, amphibious assault vehicle (AAV), reconnaissance, and combat engineer units.¹⁸

Aviation Combat Element (ACE) may range in size from a composite helicopter squadron to one or more aircraft wings. It may include offensive air support, assault support, air reconnaissance, anti-air warfare, electronic warfare, and control of aircraft and missiles.¹⁹

Combat Service Support Element (CSSE) is a task organization tailored to provide combat service support which is beyond the organic capability of the subordinate elements. It may provide any or all of the following functions: supply, maintenance, engineer, medical\ dental, administrative data processing (ADP), material handling, personal services, food services, transportation, military police, disbursing and financial management.²⁰

ORGANIZATION

The Marine Corps has two Fleet Marine Forces. One is located with the Atlantic Fleet and the other is located with the Pacific

Fleet. These forces are comprised of air, ground, and logistical support units which are capable of being task organized and deployed as MAGTFs. There are five configurations and four of them are the basic MAGTF organizations:

A Marine Expeditionary Corps (MEC) is used when separate Marine Expeditionary Forces (MEF) are employed in the same theater, a MEC may be formed to maintain continuing MAGTF unity of command.²¹

A Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) is the largest (30,000-60,000 Marines and Sailors) and most powerful of the MAGTFs. It may range in size from less than one to multiple infantry divisions and aircraft wings, together with a force service support group. It is normally commanded by a lieutenant general. It is capable of conducting a wide range of expeditionary and amphibious operations, and with its 60 days of support, is capable of sustained operations ashore in any geographic environment.²²

The Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), with 4,000-18,000 Marines and Sailors, is normally built around a reinforced infantry regiment, an aircraft group, and a brigade service support group. It is commanded by a general officer and is capable of rapid deployment and employment in expeditionary, amphibious, and reinforcement roles as required. MEBs may be forward deployed on amphibious shipping, deployed by strategic or tactical airlift to fall in on prepositioned equipment and sustainment, or deployed by air as required. As with the MEF, the MEB has special operations capabilities derived from the enhanced training and equipment possessed by its subordinate units. The MEB deploys with up to 30 days of sustainment.²³

The Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), is a MAGTF of 1,000-4,000 Marines and Sailors, normally comprised of a reinforced battalion, a helicopter squadron reinforced with deployed and CONUS on-call fixed-wing assets, and a service support group. The MEU is commanded by a colonel and is routinely forward-deployed as the immediately responsive, on-scene, sea-based Marine component of the Fleet Commander's amphibious and power projection forces. The MEU is task organized, trained, and equipped to conduct a wide variety of conventional and specialized operations. Foremost is its capability to conduct long-range amphibious raids from over-the-horizon, without electronic emissions, during periods of darkness, and under adverse weather or sea conditions. For sustained operations ashore, the MEU may serve as the forward element of a MEB. The MEU can also

deploy on short notice by a mix of tactical and strategic airlift for contingencies in support of fleet and combatant CINC. MEUs deployed in amphibious shipping normally carry 15 days of sustainment.²⁴

Special Purpose Forces are small, task organized MAGTFs configured to accomplish missions for which the MEF, MEB, and MEU are not appropriate. They can be configured, trained, and equipped to conduct a wide variety of conventional and other operations. They can be deployed by a variety of means, to include amphibious or commercial ships, tactical or strategic airlift, or by organic Marine Corps aviation assets. These forces are normally composed of Marines highly trained in day/night operations to include insert/extract, raid, and strike operations. They may possess extensive surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities to include Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, radio reconnaissance, and counterintelligence assets, as required. These forces can be employed in a variety of missions to include Mobile Training Teams, security assistance operations, and Small Independent Action Forces.²⁵

The different MAGTF configurations and their missions have been listed above. These missions denote the capabilities of the expeditionary force(s) but to various degrees. Some of these capabilities are totally intact where others are either partially complete or are still being planned and developed. For example, the special purpose forces MAGTF advertises the fact that it can field mobile training teams; however, this is a limited capability due to the non-availability of interpreters in the Marine Corps. This MAGTF also does not have any sustainment capability and some of its specialized equipment is still being developed for the different missions that it has been assigned. These various capabilities, whether fully implemented or only partially complete, will be addressed in more detail in the "Low-intensity Conflicts and the MAGTF" section of this study.

LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICTS:
THREAT, POLICY, AND DOCTRINE

THREAT

In the post World War II era, nuclear proliferation was a dominating factor between the United States and the Soviet Union.²⁶ Allies congregated around their respective super power establishing a bipolar political world.²⁷ Direct military confrontations were avoided in this "Cold War" environment. Instead, they each exploited their appropriate political, economical and military interests through low-intensity conflicts in Third World countries. A status quo was in effect.

As long as nuclear parity exists between the United States and the Soviet Union, the operational continuum between the two powers will probably be limited to conventional warfare in the Third World environment. History has shown that these kinds of armed conflicts usually start at the low-intensity level. Briefly defined,

"low-intensity conflict is a politico-military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states. It frequently involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies. Low-intensity conflict ranges from subversion to the use of armed force. It is waged by a combination of means, employing political, economic, informational, and military instruments. Low-intensity conflicts are often localized, generally in the Third World, but contain regional and global security implications."²⁸

Even as the next century approaches, international states are struggling to improve their own political, economical, informational, and military instruments. Each state has its own infrastructure from which to build and advance. The world economy is sensitive to these differences. Every state has its own important resource(s) to provide. In a peaceful environment, a stable co-existence exists within each state and their regional area. This balance can be altered through an imbalance of any one of the four instruments. It can be done by internal or external conflicts.²⁹ International state conflicts in the past have not had a real impact on the world, however, this is changing. A prominent example is in the Middle East right now. President Saddam Hussein of Iraq has annexed Kuwait, a separate state, through a strong military blitzkrieg. Both Iraq and Kuwait are world oil suppliers. Hussein's reasons for occupying Kuwait are quite clear; he wants to control more of the world's oil reserves and to have more of an influence in establishing the price of oil. Thus far he has not been successful in effecting the world's economic balance but has definitely affected the political government of Kuwait.³⁰

As Third World powers proliferate their own instruments, many new possibilities like Iraq and Kuwait will exist. Third World countries will continue to modernize with more advanced technology in all four areas. This could create an extremely volatile scenario when there is a regional imbalance of military power. If the United States remains a dominant force in the world, it can expect in some way to be involved in these Third World low-intensity conflicts.³¹

POLICY

Back in 1987 the United States Congress saw the immediate need for policy and guidance in low-intensity conflicts. They directed the President, through the "Fiscal Year 1987 Defense Authorization Bill", to report to them "The Capabilities to Engage in Low-Intensity Conflicts and Conduct Special Operations." At that time, President Reagan responded with a directive, by the same title, that promulgated policy and strategy for low-intensity conflicts. It identified four categories for low-intensity conflicts that were applicable to military capabilities: Insurgency and Counter-insurgency, Peacekeeping Operations, Combatting Terrorism, and Peacetime Contingency Operations. He also directed a "Board of Low-Intensity Conflict" be established within the National Security Council to ensure that policies and strategies were effectively and efficiently carried out.³²

Our current Commander and Chief, President Bush, has continued to reinforce this need for positive action on low-intensity conflicts. In the National Security Strategy of the United States (March 1990) he made it very clear to the rest of the world that the United States would do everything in it's power to prevent and defend against Third World aggression. His views have been expressed in a very plain and straight forward manner and are depicted in the following statement:

In the aftermath of World War II, the United States took on an unaccustomed burden - the responsibility to lead and help defend the world's free nations. ----- In a new era, some Third World conflicts may no longer take place against the backdrop of superpower competition. Yet many

will, for a variety of reasons, continue to threaten U.S. interests. The erosion of U.S.-Soviet bipolarity could permit and in some ways encourage the growth of these challenges. ----- It is not possible to prevent or deter conflict at the lower end of the conflict spectrum in the same way or to the same degree as at the higher. American forces therefore must be capable of dealing effectively with the full range of threats, including insurgency and terrorism.³³

DOCTRINE

Once the Presidential directive was published, the Department of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and all the military services began defining their missions and roles within a low-intensity conflict. Doctrine was soon published by the Joint Chiefs of Staff which encompassed the Presidents' policy, strategy, and guidance. It addressed the issue in JCS Pub 3-0, "Doctrine For Unified And Joint Operations", as follows:

In the specific case of the US military instrument, LIC involves types of operations which could occur across the entire operational continuum. US military aspects of LIC include four categories of operations: combatting terrorism, peacekeeping, support for insurgency and counterinsurgency, and peacetime contingency operations. Combatting terrorism occurs across the operational continuum; peacekeeping does not involve armed struggle or a clash of forces; and insurgency and counterinsurgency and some contingency operations may be included in the state of conflict.³⁴

The Joint Chiefs also addressed the subject in JCS Pub 3-07, "Doctrine For Joint Operations In Low-Intensity Conflict" as follows:

The US military must maintain and improve its capability to participate in LIC operations in support of national security objectives. This should be accomplished through the appropriate mixture of the indirect and direct application of military power. Therefore, as directed by the NCA, the US military must be prepared to:

- (1) Assist other nations in defending themselves against internal and external threats.
- (2) Support selected democratic resistance movements.
- (3) Participate in peacekeeping activities.

(4) Combat terrorism by maintaining a capability to respond directly prior to, during, or after an incident.

(5) Conduct worldwide peacetime contingency operations on short notice.

(6) Conduct protracted operations requiring extensive assets.

(7) Assist interagency efforts to suppress international drug trafficking.³³

REORGANIZATION

As stated, the tasks were clear to all the service components. The only thing that was unclear was the mission each service would have in the low-intensity environment. Because of this ambiguity and the fierce competitiveness among the services for the budget dollars, each of them were involved in a major planning effort to demonstrate their capabilities in handling a situation in a low-intensity environment. They hoped this would bring their service more of the budget dollars so that they could overcome their deficiencies in this type of environment and to also ease the budget dollar reduction within their organization.

In some cases major changes were identified and in others only minor adjustments were requested. However, congressional leaders were busy mandating policy that would end this rivalry which existed among the services. This new command structure was done through the Goldwater-Nichols reorganization act of 1986 which directed that the services organize to fight under a single commander (Unified and/or Specified) so that the maximum effort of the United States Armed Forces could be used effectively in any conflict, across the entire spectrum or continuum, to include low-intensity conflicts around the world.³⁴

LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICTS
AND
THE MARINE AIR GROUND TASK FORCE

DOCTRINE

The United States Marine Corps, because of its past experience with low-intensity conflicts, got into step very quickly under the skillful guidance of its present commandant, General A.M. Gray. He reorganized the Marine Corps from a strictly amphibious force into an expeditionary organization. Doctrine was changed to reflect this new concept.³⁷ The Warfighting Center at Quantico, Virginia, developed an "Operational Concept for Marine Corps Employment in Low-Intensity Conflicts." This was a real upgrade from the "Small Wars" manual of 1940. This concept was built from lessons learned from Marine Corps past actions in "Small Wars" and from the "Combined Action Platoons" that were used during the Vietnam War. In addition, the Army's "Special Action Force or Security Assistance Force" concept from this same era was also scrutinized and provided a lot of valuable input for the operational concept.³⁸

The main purpose for this "Operational Concept for Marine Corps Deployment in Low-Intensity Conflict (LIC) was to identify "the MAGTF concept and mission in LIC; the civil military enhancement concept; enhancements; and the command, control, communications, and framework for MAGTF attendant to these operations."³⁹ It also sets forth the operational functions for the forward deployed MAGTF. But most importantly, it stresses the fact that "the strength of the Marine

Corps in LIC lies in providing light self-contained forces which come from the sea and are self-sustaining, completely integrated combined armed forces that can effectively utilize all of the components of War that is capable of quickly and effectively executing their mission through a central command with decentralized control."⁴⁰

Even though it stresses the need for accomplishing the mission, this new concept also identifies the fact that the MAGTF commander, when operating in a low-intensity conflict, must know the political ramifications and who to deal with when working in this kind of environment. Because of the complexity of the situation, he must understand that the U.S. Chief of the Diplomatic Mission, normally the Ambassador, has control over all U.S. interests and in-country personnel; he also is the key figure in orchestrating and coordinating numerous activities because of the political-military implications. Therefore, it is imperative that the MAGTF commander keep this line of communication continuously open.⁴¹

Besides being politically complex, the low-intensity conflict environment can also be very diverse. This is due to the different operational categories of conflict inherent within its definition. In this new "Operational Concept for Marine Corps Employment in Low-Intensity Conflict" and as defined in the "MAGTF Master Plan", the Marine Corps provides two operational categories as guidelines for the different levels of conflict. They are stability operations, and limited objective operations (see fig. 4-1). These two operational categories cover the four National Military Categories for low-intensity conflicts (see fig. 4-2).

MAGTF OPERATIONS IN THE SPECTRUM OF LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

-----FUNCTIONAL MISSION AREAS-----	
-----Military Operations----- -----Short of War-----	Military Ops Other Than General War -----
<u>STABILITY OPERATIONS</u>	<u>LIMITED OBJECTIVE OPERATIONS</u>
1) Presence\Amphibious Operations	1) <u>Peacetime Contingency Operations</u>
2) Humanitarian Assistance Operations - Deliberate Operations - Civic Action Operations	- NEO - Raids - Seizures - Reinforcements - Recovery - Hostage Rescue
3) MTT Assistance Operations	
4) Security Assistance Operations	
5) <u>Peacekeeping Operations</u>	2) <u>Counterterrorism Operations</u>
6) Support To Counter Narcotics Operations	
7) <u>Counterinsurgency Operations</u>	

Figure 4-1

NATIONAL MILITARY CATEGORIES

INSURGENCY\COUNTERINSURGENCY

Security Assistance
Mobile Training Team
Logistics Ops.
Intelligence Ops
Civil - Military Ops
Civil Affairs
Psychological Ops
Humanitarian\Civic Assistance
 Medical\Dental
 Engineering
Tactical Operations
SIAF

PEACETIME CONTINGENCY OPS

Disaster Relief
Noncombatant Evacuation Ops
Military Presence
 Forward Deployed Force
 Show Of Force
 Political Reinforcement\
 Intervention
 Peace Enforcing
 Strike Operations
 (proactive of Retaliatory)

COMBATTING TERRORISM (ANTI\COUNTERTERRORISM)

Intelligence
Security
 Physical
 Personnel
Hostage Negotiations

Hostage Rescue
Assault Ops

PEACEKEEPING OPS

Supervision Of Withdrawals
 and Disengagements
Cease-Fire Supervision
Supervision Of Prisoner
 Of War Exchange
Supervision Of Demilitariza-
 tion & Demobilization

Figure 4-2

CAPABILITIES

Since the MEB is the largest MAGTF that "may be forward deployed on amphibious shipping, deployed by strategic or tactical airlift to fall in on prepositioned equipment and sustainment, or deployed by air as required,"⁴² its assets and capabilities will be used as the notional MAGTF for analyzing the Marine Corps aggregate utility in influencing the spectrum of low-intensity conflicts. The assets and capabilities will be looked at in both stability operations and limited objective operations. The roles of the four elements of the MAGTF (command and control, ground combat, aviation combat, and combat service support) will also be included in the analysis to see how they are aligned during the various operations. If a larger or smaller MAGTF organization is specifically task organized to influence or deal with a particular low-intensity conflict or crisis, it will be identified at that time, during this analysis.

The Marine Corps has the capability to handle the preponderance of missions within the low-intensity environment that are within the two operational categories: stability operations and limited objective operations. These two areas (fig. 4-1), as previously stated, cover the notional military categories which involve combatting terrorism, insurgency and counterinsurgency, peacetime contingencies, and peacekeeping operations (fig. 4-2). In some of the operational areas the mission cannot be handled inclusive with the requisite assets within the MAGTF. This is particularly true in dealing with stability operations. In these cases, outside expertise

will be required to assist the MAGTF in accomplishing the mission. This additional expertise can come from the Marine Corps Reserve organization and/or other services. An important point to remember is that the MAGTF is usually supported by a unified command when deployed. Therefore, the MAGTF has access through this command to those units that have the additional expertise that could be required during these low-intensity conflict operations.

STABILITY OPERATIONS

Stability operations are the most peaceful level of operations for the MAGTF in a low-intensity environment. They provide many forms of assistance to a host nation that has gone beyond peaceful competition, whether external or internal. This is the time frame when some type of civil-military action could possibly prevent or at least help deter the situation from developing into a limited military objective operation. However, these operations can vary in duration, from short to protracted MAGTF commitments. The Small Wars manual of 1940 describes them as follows: "...such operations may well be executed in a dynamic environment creating great uncertainty and resulting in a situation of precarious responsibility and doubtful authority under indeterminate order lacking specific instruction..."⁴³ Even though the manual was published in 1940, it still projected the same type of limitless boundaries that exist in today's low-intensity stability operations. The draft copy of "Operational Concept for Marine Corps Employment in Low-Intensity

Conflicts" added a few more parameters to the definition and defines stability operations as follows:

"--- operations conducted by the MAGTF through the employment of a combination of civil-military resources. These operations are conducted either to influence another state whose government is unstable, inadequate, or ill-equipped to preserve life and public welfare; or to support an insurgency against a hostile government. Stability operations normally involve the use of force only in self defense. The objective is to generate good will or alleviate conditions that if left unattended, could threaten US national interests. Stability operations can be conducted over a protracted period and involve missions that are usually not violent. Emphasis is placed on helping the supported group to help itself. Civil affairs (CA) and psychological operations (PSYOP) assets play a large role in these operations, as well as engineer, medical, and dental units, etc."⁴⁴

There is a contradiction in terms within the stability operation definition. The Marine Corps cannot define it in such a way as to include support for insurgency operations. Insurgencies are efforts to de-stabilize a state and its governments, not stabilize it!⁴⁵ In order to resolve this contradiction, the following phrase needs to be deleted from the definition, "or to support an insurgency against a hostile government." Due to the fact that insurgency operations are an attempt to exploit, disrupt, and create civil unrest, the Marine Corps should address these kinds of operations under their second category which is limited objective operations.

In stability operations there are seven operational areas:

- 1) Presence\Amphibious, 2) Humanitarian Assistance, 3) Mobilization Training Team Assistance, 4) Security Assistance, 5) Peacekeeping, 6) Support to Counter Narcotics, and 7) Counterinsurgency. They are

categorized as "nation building" type operations which have very few finite parameters. The reason for this is because low-intensity conflicts are so broad based. They can "threaten all our basic national interests, to include defense of the homeland, national economic well-being, a favorable world order, and promotion of American interests abroad."⁴⁶ However, these types of operations provide our government with the capability to respond to these various threats. If correctly planned and coordinated, these operations "can influence other governments or political-military organizations to respect US interests and international law."⁴⁷ They also provide our leaders with the opportunity to assist other nations' or states' in reorganizing or re-aligning their political, informational, economical, or military instruments when threatened by a low-intensity environment. Therefore, these operations need to be successful, because they are an integrated part of the national strategy.

Presence\Amphibious is the first operational category. In evaluating this operation, it should be noted that the worldwide presence of the MAGTF's is continuous. They are routinely deployed throughout the world aboard amphibious ships. Because of their worldwide presence, these expeditionary forces are readily available to "show the flag" and to participate in multifarious, joint and combined exercises. This enables the deployed forces to keep their diverse skills honed and to practice executing different roles and missions. For example, a MAGTF in the Pacific will participate yearly in "Team Spirit", an operation that is conducted with allied military

forces in South Korea. A MAGTF in the Atlantic will deploy into the Norway countryside in an operation called "Anchor Express". The list of global exercises that the MAGTF's participate in is numerous but they accomplish a very important mission; they "show the force". This then "lends credibility to the nation's promises and commitments, increases its regional influence, and demonstrates resolve."⁴⁸

The MAGTF can be considered a responsive and reliable force because of its concept of operation. Its present capabilities allow it to respond rapidly and in a decisive manner. There are three resident elements within the MAGTF that give it this type of decisiveness. They are "1) forward deployed MEU's whose afloat posture allows them to sail to potential crisis areas; 2) CONUS and forward-based air alert MAGTFs; and 3) Maritime Pre-positioning Forces (MPF) that can transit to the region of potential conflict."⁴⁹ Possessing and displaying these kinds of assets will hopefully deter a conflict rather than create one.

The command and control, ground combat, and aviation combat elements are practicing the execution of their tactical missions during these exercises. It is helping to prepare them for a more violent scenario. Their planning and task coordinating usually involves a significant amount of support assets. These assets are provided by the combat service support element and through host nation support agreements. However, whether provided through the host nation or from assets within the MAGTF, all services and support coordination is done through the combat service support element. Even though it is just a stabilizing operation where there are very few

parameters, the operational plans are conducted within a pre-established time frame with definite objectives. Its purposes is to give the combined arms team a more realistic scenario in which to practice accomplishing its mission with the combat service support element providing the logistical resources.

Humanitarian assistance operations generally encompass three types of operations: 1) deliberate, 2) disaster relief, and 3) military civic action. In civil-military operations like these, the MAGTF's command and control and combat service support elements will be the forward forces. They are usually aligned and reinforced with the assets and personnel to handle the additional civic action requirements. These additional assets can come from resident assets, reserve or active, and from sister service components. The ground combat and aviation elements will usually be placed in a support role. This reversal, in the deployment of forces, requires the MAGTF commander to depend heavily upon his combat service support element commander and his equipment. Because of the human factor involved with these operations, more "good will" is generated and "hearts won" due to the unselfish sharing and caring of those committed to the operations.

Deliberate operations are based on pre-approved plans with host countries. They authorize the United States to execute certain actions in emergency situations, which are defined in the operation plan. In the execution of these plans, the MAGTF commander can use either assets and personnel from units staged in the continental United States or those that are forward deployed. In some of these

plans there are very explicit instructions on what assistance will be provided and what is not authorized.

Disaster relief operations usually occur with a short warning order. Because of their time sensitivity, MAGTF's afloat or specially configured MAGTF's are airlifted to the disaster site. A recent case was the earthquake in the Philippines on 16 July 1990. MAGTF 4-90, forward deployed and stationed at Subic Bay, Philippines, was able to send Combat Service Support Detachment 35 from Cubi Point Naval Air Station to Cabanatuan City, Philippines, where the disaster occurred. Due to the MAGTF being forward deployed with combat service support assets and personnel, it was able to organize and rapidly deploy a unit with the capabilities to assist at the emergency site.⁵⁰

The last of the humanitarian assistance operations is the military civic action operation. This is where the MAGTF "assist indigenous military forces in projects useful to the local population".⁵¹ Its objective is to "provide effective assistance while earning and preserving the goodwill of the populace."⁵² The combat service support element will be the key element during these operations. It will work through the command and control element for any additional military or other agency assets or skills not resident in the MAGTF. The support mission in most cases will be to establish any or all of the following; "interior communications, afford medical relief, erect shelter, improve sanitation, distribute food\water, and assist in preserving civil order."⁵³

To accomplish these assigned tasks, the MAGTF's engineer, communications, logistical, and medical assets will be heavily

engaged with their equipment and skilled personnel. However, the assets and levels of expertise are limited. For major projects the commander will have to rely on his staff to evaluate the requirements. If they are beyond their capabilities, then the Naval Construction Battalion or the Army Corps of Engineers will have to be tasked with reinforcing the MAGTF or assigned the project in its entirety.

In evaluating capabilities for these civil operations, the MAGTF commander can also consider the Civil Affairs Groups if the President initiates a reserve mobilization. These organizations are located in the reserve structure. They have the mission and some assets to help the MAGTF personnel overcome the numerous cultural and language differences. Their capabilities are comprised of an international law\claims team, a displaced personnel\refugee team, a liaison team, a civil affairs team, an interpreter, and medical personnel. As a group they provide a vast array of expertise that is not available in the active structure. The only active organization that could provide this type of support to the MAGTF is the Army's Special Forces.⁵⁴

The next operational category in stability operations is the Mobile Training Team. It is used to improve the military instrument of a Third World country rather than its economical or informational instruments like humanitarian assistance operations. The team's mission is to "develop a self-training capability within a foreign armed service through in-country instruction of a training cadre."⁵⁵ The command and control and the ground combat elements are the major

contributors to these types of operation because of the level of training it involves. The aviation and combat service support elements are positioned to provide the required logistical support for the forward elements.

This type of operation can be done through a planned exercise with a host nation or with no prior planning, as an on-call operation. Even with a short lead time, the objective remains the same, "to provide the recipients with their own organic training capability."~~SE~~ The operation is usually executed by either organized teams, deployed MAGTFs, or other MAGTFs that are already engaged in stability operations. Whatever the force composition, it will concentrate on deficient critical skills in an effort to advance the foreign military force far enough along so that they can defend their own country. This training is usually done through approved political agreements, that include stipulations on the time frame in which these exercises will occur.

MAGTFs have the capability and are repeatedly being tasked to provide mobile training teams. However, the pool of language proficient Marines is limited due to various constraints. Therefore, compromises are continually being made to fill these positions on the teams. In many cases, the Marines are professionally and technically proficient but could use more experience in speaking the language. To overcome this deficiency, the constraints have to be reviewed so that the better qualified Marines are available for these assignments. The effectiveness of these teams relies heavily on the instructor's

capability to effectively communicate with the common soldier of that country.⁵⁷

The MAGTF in Security Assistance Operations will normally be part of a joint or combined task force. They are usually conducted when there is a significant threat to U.S. interests. This includes property and personnel. The operational mission is defined in the MAGTF Master Plan as follows:

"(1) protect lives and property of U.S. citizens or selected host country individuals; (2) assist in maintaining the existence of or independence of, a government in accordance with treaty provisions; (3) protect treaty rights; (4) develop security perimeters; (5) provide security intelligence support to friendly governments; (6) enhance the host nations' security capabilities."⁵⁸

Such operations usually deal with a number of functions which includes security, civic action, psychological operations, and public affairs. Security responsibilities will generally be handled by the ground element with specific instructions and guidance. The reason for this type of concern and detail is due to the nature of security operations; they can start out as a stability operation but if handled incorrectly can easily be elevated into a limited objective operation. The MAGTF will also be augmented by special components to handle the other functions. This includes the human intelligence (HumInt) team, interrogation-translator team (ITT), and counterintelligence team (CIT) or as these teams are referred to in the Marine Corps, "The LIC Team."⁵⁹ In addition, the civic action group (CAG) will be assigned to handle the civic action and public affairs functions. However, the Army will have to be relied upon to provide the psychological operations capability since this function

is not resident within the MAGTF or the Marine Corps. The aviation and combat service support elements will be used for logistical support, security force augmentation, and other required tasks. All these functions will be coordinated through the command and control element which in turn will keep the joint task force commander appraised of all the functional areas and their progress within the operation.

Peacekeeping operations are probably the most misunderstood of all the stability and limited objective operations because they do not include hostilities. The MAGTF's main mission when dealing with these operations is to act as a neutral third party between two war torn parties that have consented to this military action. It will normally be part of a combined or international force. Functions that will probably occur in this operational category include reconnaissance, surveillance, security patrols, establishment of checkpoints and barriers, and civil military operations. Security in these operations is most important, especially against terrorism. The whole concept of the operation is to maintain the peace while diplomatic efforts are used to deter and possibly prevent any future outbreaks of violence.

The MAGTF commander needs to convey to his personnel within the different elements that peacekeeping operations are usually long term in duration. The mission will more than likely be general in nature and that the rules of engagement will impose definite restrictions and will be limited to only specific circumstances, such as self-defense. It is important that the primary objective of the

operation, which is to "deter or contain any further outbreak of violence,"⁶⁰ is apparent to the entire MAGTF.

Due to the high profile of peacekeeping operations, especially because of the many political controversies that may exist, the coordination between the different elements will have to be well planned and executed. The command and control element will have to be the focal point for both the national and international chains of command. The ground combat element will have to handle the bulk of the security control measures, to include extensive reconnaissance and surveillance, in conjunction with their routine patrolling. The aviation element will provide reconnaissance flights in addition to their organic support mission. Protective obstacles, such as barriers and bunkers, will be constructed by the combat service support element on request or as appropriate. Their primary mission will be to provide the required logistical support that isn't under contract through the host nation. Peacekeeping operations in general are more difficult to control and coordinate for the different elements because of the status quo that has to be maintained within the peaceful environment. In general, greater risks have to be taken because it is not a war zone. Thus, only those countermeasures that are deemed appropriate in this type of operation are authorized to be employed to protect the force.

Supporting counternarcotics operations with the MAGTF, or for that matter any military forces, were not legalized until Title XI was passed of the FY 1989 National Defense Authorization Act. The passage of this law gave the Department of Defense the responsibility

authorize and assign military components, including MAGTF's, to assist the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) in its effort to control the flow of illegal drug into the United States.

The MAGTF, when employed in a counternarcotics operation, "will usually operate as a component in U.S. Government interagency task force. When tasked by appropriate authority, MAGTFs will provide support to U.S. agencies conducting counternarcotics operations outside U.S. borders."⁴¹ Their mission will be to help "detect, disrupt, interdict, and destroy illicit drugs and the infrastructure (personnel, raw materials, laboratories, and distribution systems) of illicit drug networks."⁴² They will provide all possible organic support inherent to their capabilities and equipment. This will include aerial and ground reconnaissance and surveillance, along with the technique skills and expertise resident within each of the units. The command and control element will also help coordinate and plan the operation(s), as may be necessary, because of their extensive experience in operating within a joint environment.

Counterinsurgency operations are probably one of the most complex contingencies that the MAGTF will have to confront. The following definition encompasses all the complexities of the operations.

"Counterinsurgency entails the art and science of developing and implementing the political, economic, sociological, informational, and military resources of a nation to defeat an insurgency. Counterinsurgency operations are principally small unit actions fully integrated with local government operations while larger, highly mobile task forces in reserve operate from sea bases against concentrations of insurgent forces. Intelligence operations (tactical and strategic) are the focal point of all counterinsurgency operations. There are two primary types of counterinsurgency tactical operations -- strike

operations and consolidation operations. The primary objective of these operations is to establish a secure environment within which internal development is possible by finding, fixing, and destroying insurgent forces."⁶³

As depicted in this definition the center of gravity for the Marine Corps and its MAGTF's is to engage and destroy the insurgent. This would do nicely in a limited objective operation, but since it has been sub-categorized under stability operations it needs to be revisited and the mission for the MAGTF redefined. The reason is very apparent; this is probably the worst method in which to confront an insurgent. "Crushing the armed enemy's will to resist without rectifying the conditions that made insurgency possible will produce, at best, a temporary peace."⁶⁴ However, the most successful approach is to try and resolve the situation by non-military actions. If this strategy fails then the operation should still be driven toward trying "to fight the military war and the nonmilitary war simultaneously."⁶⁵ If the Marine Corps is serious about their involvement in counterinsurgency operations, a new approach and definition needs to be developed.

Due to these various complexities, the Marine Corps and its MAGTFs, as a single organization, do not have all the inherent capabilities required to affectively orchestrate or successfully conduct, in its entirety, these kinds of operations. Therefore, it is apparent that the best way to utilize a MAGTF and its capabilities in a counterinsurgency operation is within a joint environment.

The first point that needs to be addressed is the MAGTF and the support functions that it cannot provide. It is lacking or limited in three vital areas which are extremely important when conducting

counterinsurgency operations. It does not have a strong active duty civil affairs capability, an active and functioning psychological operations program, or a large enough pool of regional language experts to conduct and support an operation against an insurgency. The Marine Corps is attempting to improve these functional areas within the MAGTF, but due to budget cuts and force reductions it will be a long time until an effective program, if any, can be established within the three areas.⁴³

Presently, the only structurally organized civil affairs capability within the Marine Corps is in the reserve organization. There are two units that have this mission. They are the 3rd and 4th Civil Affairs Groups (CAG). Each CAG is comprised of two detachments. These detachments have a headquarters, an international law\claims team, a displaced personnel\refugee team, a liaison team, a civil affairs team, one interpreter, and one doctor per detachment and one at the group headquarters for a total of three. Their mission is to support the MAGTF(s), especially in these types of operations. The only problem in tasking the reserves with this kind of mission is the 179 day rule. The president has to mobilize them if they are to be more than just reserve participants in an operation for more than a short period of time. They can only be effective if they are available. Waiting for the president to mobilize them can only delay their usefulness in any situation.⁴⁴

Psychological operations is the next functional area that has been almost non-existent within the past ranks of the Marine Corps and the MAGTF. A new psychological program has been started in the

Corps with the mission of educating its leaders on the importance of psychological operations in various situations and conflicts. It is not a program in which the Marine Corps is attempting to develop similar and equivalent psychological operational type units as the Army. This would be a mistake for that very reason. The Corps does not have the personnel nor the money to duplicate an already existing Army program that works. But the Army has documented some valuable lessons learned in past experiences, and these lessons need to be used to teach each Marine that deploys in a MAGTF the importance of psychological operations and how effectively it can be used if employed correctly by the duty experts.**

The last functional area that the Marine Corps and the MAGTF are extremely limited in their Foreign Area Officer (FAO) corps. These are individuals that are specially trained in the history, culture and language of a certain geographical region or country in the world. They are usually trained in an academic environment for 12 months and then sent to their area or region of study to live for at least 6 to 12 months. Regional experts are a very important asset to a commander when military intervention or assistance is required in that area of the world. Presently the Marine Corps has four quotas a year to the Army's FAO program. Some feel this needs to be expanded to eight or more to be of use to the Marine Corps and the MAGTF. This is probably true but what is enough? Since most future conflicts or wars will more than likely be dealt with in a joint environment, it really isn't important how many individuals each service has, but how they screen the individual candidates to participate in the program

and then develop their service careers thereafter. The MAGTF will probably always be short of FAO's no matter how many quotas are acquired, but every organization in the United States is probably short at various times of interpreters and regional experts.⁶⁷

The strong points of the MAGTF, when involved in counterinsurgency operations are in its GCE. This element has the ability to field security assistance teams, mobile training teams, small independent action forces, and any other type of combined arms team that is needed to deal with the insurgent. It is able to put these kinds of teams together because of three significant factors: 1) it requires all its personnel to complete their individual professional skills training before deploying; 2) each member of the element is provided state of the art weapon systems to train with and use on deployment; and 3) all GCE personnel are brought together six to nine months in advance of a deployment so that they can complete, as a unit, an extensive operational deployment training program. These are all important functions and factors that each GCE gets before it deploys. This helps to prepare it to undertake various missions that the MAGTF might be assigned which could include engaging in a military intervention during a counterinsurgency operation.

On the end of the spectrum, however, is the combat service support (CSS) capability. During counterinsurgency operations, the combat service support element (CSSE) is supposed to be the front line unit and supported by the other three elements in the MAGTF. Its mission during these kinds of operations is to provide humanitarian and domestic support to the local population of the host country. It

is capable of providing medical and dental programs, light and medium construction and erection of public buildings, minor improvements to bridges and roads, and various enhancements to the local population communication support network. In many Third World countries this type of support is probably significant compared to what they have had in the past.

The Marine Corps in the past decade has put a lot of time and manpower into realigning the structure of the GCE and a large portion of its budget dollars into modernizing its equipment so that it can truly be a total force in readiness. Because of the attention given to the GCE, the CSSE was given a back seat in the planning, acquisition, and budget cycles. This tactical planning effort for the GCE has caused the CSSE to fall behind in modernizing its force structure and equipment. Its old and antiquated support equipment is not being replaced. When the old equipment reached the end of life expectancy cycle, it was just being extended without the proper cost analysis to determine the feasibility of such a move. In some cases spare parts are not readily available to repair this equipment in a reasonable time frame. In other situations, support systems are bought and fielded without any consideration being given to how they would link into existing systems. Unfortunately for the CSSE, many of the new systems that are being acquired do not meet the mission requirements of the equipment that they are replacing. This has created a number of equipment shortfalls in other functional areas. A great example of this kind of analogy and planning was demonstrated in the support area of mobile electric power (MEP). The Marine Corps

and all its units supported two different kinds of MEP units. This included the sixty and the four hundred hertz ((Hz): a unit of frequency equal to one cycle per second) power units. The reason for these two different power systems within the Corps was due to the fact that all the communications equipment required the four hundred Hz MEP units and was not compatible with the sixty hertz MEP units that supplied power to the rest of the Marine Corps. Approximately four to five years ago when the new generation of communication equipment was fielded, it no longer required the higher cycle MEP equipment. Instead, they required the 60Hz MEP units. Thus, all the four hundred Hz MEP units were deleted from the CSSE's inventory. This change in the communication equipment has doubled the requirements for 60Hz MEP support. Presently, no additional MEP acquisitions are scheduled to replace the deleted 400Hz MEP units. But that is not the end to the problem. Recently, the Marine Corps planners decided to replace all the old self-contained flood light units with new lighter units. The only catch was they required their own dedicated 60Hz MEP source. However, to resolve this problem the planners decided to place all the new units into the prepositioned war reserve inventory. This meant that if the CSSE's were to continue providing flood light support they would have to continue to maintain their old units until, sometime in the not so distant future, the secondary repair parts are depleted from the system. These are the kinds of planning and acquisition problems that are a real time threat to the mission and the support that the CSSE's can provide. If it is not given the attention that it deserves, then the support

elements will continue to be poorly equipped for supporting any kind of counterinsurgency operations.

This does not mean to imply that the support by the CSSE is not of the highest quality. Every CSSE that is deployed accomplishes its assigned mission in an outstanding manner. What this implies is that there is a more prudent way to manage the needs of the CSSE and enhancing its equipment capability at the same time. It can be done with relatively minimal cost and it doesn't require the large amount of manpower that is presently providing the CSS requirements today.

Centralizing all the CSS personnel and equipment under the FSSG's \ CSSE's would definitely be the most cost efficient and effective way to manage the support requirements of the MAGTF's. This would increase the CSSE's equipment availability and enhance its manpower resources when operating in a counterinsurgency environment. In these kinds of operations the CSSE is the echelon that the other elements are supporting. Yet, these elements now control a large portion of the CSS assets in the MAGTF. The CSSE has no control over these assets and cannot effectively manage them. If these assets were centralized in the CSSEs, it would increase the MAGTF support capability. Larger support missions could be undertaken because the assets needed to accomplish these missions would be available. This does not mean that the GCE and ACE would be left without support, quite the contrary. There would still be a contingency of CSS assigned to support their requirements. The only difference would be who controlled them and who assigned them their mission priority. If the ACE or GCE had a requirement for CSS, it would be prioritized and

coordinated by the CSSE. It would then be accomplished in conjunction with the total scheme of CSS requirements for the operations.

This kind of an organization would enable the CSSEs to function under a total support force concept which would improve their capabilities within a counterinsurgency theater of operation. It produces a better product because the professionally trained support personnel are now in charge of these domestic and civil projects rather than a GCE or ACE commander. Additionally, it gives these specially trained CSS personnel the access to enough of the right equipment to accomplish more of the larger tasks that need to be assigned and completed.

Centralizing the CSSEs control over the all the CS and CSS support equipment and personnel would reduce the variety and disparity in equipment acquisition programs that exist today. Field input for new equipment would be reduced from sixteen different organizations, that presently have CSS equipment, down to four. This would produce a much more manageable CSS equipment development program and in the end produce a better quality product.

The Marine Corps and its MAGTF's lack a number of functional area capabilities when entering into a counterinsurgency operation. However, the CSS capabilities that they can provide should be executed in the most expeditious and proficient manner possible.

LIMITED OBJECTIVE OPERATIONS

Limited objective operations is the second operational category that the MAGTF uses to categorize its support in a low-intensity environment. There are two subdivisions within this category that clarify the type of conflicts the MAGTF can support. The two categories are peacetime contingency and counterterrorism operations (see fig. 4-1). Even though there isn't a clear and decisive dividing line between limited objective and stability operations, there are two main distinctions. First, limited objective operations start out with a planned military objective in mind, and second, because of this planned use of military force, the operations tend to be more violent in nature.

The Marine Corps has defined limited objective operations, as follows;

"Offensive operations which are conducted to accomplish a specific objective. These operations are characterized by significant restrictions on the type and scope of force used, lack of exploitation, and limited focus on objective operations can take the form of strike operations, recovery operations, special warfare operations, or intelligence gathering operations."

The definition is very specific about the "lack of exploitation" in limited objective operations. The MAGTF has all the elements, assets, and capabilities used in normal operations but the guidance is clear; there will be no enemy exploitation beyond the designated objective. One of the strengths in normal operations is for the friendly force to gain the initiative by routing the enemy from the objective and then follow in pursuit. The reason for this kind of restriction and

doctrinal change is due to the operational requirements and mission. All limited objective operations are limited in scope and are organized to accomplish a specific purpose. Therefore, the geographical area and the force projection will always be limited to the requirements of the mission.

Peacetime contingency operations is the first sub-category that will be addressed within limited objective operations. It includes six types of operational responses: 1) amphibious raids, 2) port and air field seizures, 3) protection or evacuation of non-combatants (NEO), 4) reinforce committed national or international forces, 5) recover downed aircraft, equipment and personnel (clandestine insertion), and 6) in-extremis hostage rescue operations. All these operations will be well planned and the forces extensively trained so that their incursion or insertion, execution, and extraction will be done with the minimum amount of exposure to the personnel and their mission.

"Peacetime contingency operations are those military operations directed by the National Command Authorities (NCA). These operations are addressed in standing contingency plans or may be originated in a warning order. The MAGTF must be prepared to conduct a wide range of contingency operations---"

Historically, Marines have been extensively used in peacetime contingency operations. The present MAGTF organization has only increased the Marine Corps capabilities to work as part of a unilateral or combined force. It deploys as an expeditionary combined arms team. Whether air lifted or sea based, it has the capability and flexibility to rapidly respond to regional confrontations around the globe. This helps to achieve the tactical surprise and the power

projection needed to support the six types of responses in contingency operations that the MAGTF can accomplish.

Any of the four basic MAGTFs can plan and conduct contingency operations in peacetime. The shipboard MEU is probably used the most frequently of all the MAGTFs for these types of operations. The reason for this is because of its all around capabilities and continuous deployed status. The newest MAGTF, "Special Purposes Forces", is just as capable in accomplishing assigned contingency missions; however, it is a smaller force that is task organized to accomplish specific missions. Once this force is deployed their task organized structure makes it difficult to impose major changes on the force due to situational area developments. The MEU is larger, not as task oriented and definitely more flexible.

Amphibious raids, along with port and air field seizures, are the only two areas of the six that are classified as strike operations. Destruction is usually the main reason for organizing a raid; however, raids have also been successfully used for purposes of diversion and destruction. Seizing as well as destroying an objective can also deny its use to the enemy. Either method, if successful, can exploit the situation giving both the military and the political forces the opportunity to grab the initiative and maintain it. The quantifier for these kinds of attacks is JCS Pub 3-07 which defines their ends and means as follows:

"Successful attacks or raids can create situations which permit seizing and maintaining the political initiative. Attacks and raids can also place considerable pressure on governments and groups supporting terrorism. The United States executes attacks and raids to achieve specific objectives other than gaining or holding terrain. Attacks by conventional ground, air, naval, or special

operations forces acting independently or in concert are used to damage or destroy high-value targets or to demonstrate US capability and resolve to achieve a favorable result. Raids are usually small-scale operations involving swift penetration of hostile territory to secure information, temporarily seize an objective, or destroy a target(s), followed by a rapid, preplanned withdrawal."79

The MAGTF's concept has the air, ground, and naval assets to conduct these types of strike operations that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have identified. These assets and their capabilities are deployed on sea base platforms, such as LHA'S, LHD's and LPH's. They have the personnel and equipment which can effectively plan, execute, and expeditiously withdraw from strike operations.

Its air assets are a mixture of fixed and rotary wing aircraft. The fixed wing aircraft are capable of moving very swiftly, delivering a wide variety of ordnance on enemy positions, and returning. In the case of the rotary wing aircraft, they provide the lift support for the ground elements so that they can penetrate enemy positions by air and either destroy or seize enemy objectives.

The air lift capability is only one option the ground element can use in conducting strike operations. It has small naval boats that are also quite capable of performing this type of mission. They can either use their fiberglass hulled boats which have a faster more versatile capability or the smaller and slower rubber boats. These sleek ridged craft are able to travel farther, deliver larger teams and withdraw quicker than the rubber boats. However, there is a distinct advantage to the rubber boat. It is quieter and can get in closer before being detected. Each craft has its own unique design and purpose. They are viable systems that are mission oriented and

can perform specific tasks better than the other. Both however, are capable of performing and accomplishing a variety of assorted attacks and raids within the wide arena or spectrum of strike operations. To analyze and compare this even further, in section 6 of the MAGTF Master Plan, Amphibious raids are defined as follows:

"..... are conducted on short notice, usually at night, under emission control (EMCON) conditions via air and surface means from extended ranges to inflict loss or damage to opposing forces, create diversions, and capture or evacuate individuals and material by swift incursion into an objective area, followed by a planned withdrawal."71

Amphibious raids, within the MAGTF, in the last several years have undergone some major doctrinal and equipment changes. Whether surface raids, helicopter raids, artillery raids, naval gunfire raids, over-the-horizon raids, etc... changes have been made to increase the operational range and capabilities of the raid. This is due to either the "state of the art" equipment that is now in use or the up-dating procedures that are now followed in conducting raid operations. Because of all this modernization within the MAGTF organization, the raid has continued to maintain its usefulness as a effective military operation against the world of high technology and sophisticated weaponry.

History almost always repeats itself. That is why the protection and evacuation of noncombatants or installations (NEO) has been done so many times in the past by deployed Marine Corps units. It ensures that United States personnel are protected abroad. Whether personnel are being evacuated or installations being guarded, today forward deployed MAGTF's are still just as capable. It is an

expeditionary force capable of successfully carrying out protection and evacuation missions.

In recent months, for example, two separate forward deployed MAGTF's successfully conducted protection and evacuation missions. They did this by evacuating civilian personnel and protecting United States interests in Liberia and Somalia. During "Operation Sharp Edge" more than 200 Marines guarded the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia, while helicopters transported several hundred civilians out of the country.⁷² Then a few months later in "Operation Eastern Exit", seven helicopters flew into Magadishu, Somalia, and evacuated over 260 people, of which 30 were from nations other than the U.S.⁷³ Both operations required a rapid response and the flexibility to adapt to the host nation's political and military situations as they changed.

In both examples the command, ground, combat service support, and aviation elements of the MAGTF were involved in a well planned and executed operation. The Marines and their equipment were well prepared to conduct these operations because Marine Corps doctrine tells them what they have to do and their operations manuals tell them how to train for these missions. In both of the above cases they were conducted according to doctrine. And in the future, each MAGTF that deploys will also be prepared to conduct NEO operations and provide the services as defined in the "Operational Concept for Marine Corps Employment in Low-Intensity Conflict (LIC)":

"Protection or Evacuation of Noncombatants or Installations (NEO) in nonpermissive or permissive environments. Even in supposed "permissive" environments, the contingent use of force will always be planned should the environment suddenly degenerate into a "worst case"

scenario. The units involved will provide riot control, a screening force, a security force, a rescue force, an evacuation control center, medical support, and transportation of evacuees."⁷⁴

Reinforcement operations is the next sub-category and is quite straight forward in its intent. Its purpose is to "reinforce international or national military forces. This includes the capability to conduct a doctrinal relief-in-place or a passage of lines."⁷⁵ Reinforcing or combining assets with other services is not unique to just the MAGTF. But what is unique about this deployed force is its three and one concept. This combination of fire power enables the MAGTF to come in as a total entity and not in waves or piecemeal. It has one commander so the command and control is relatively simple and usually well coordinated.

A recent example of this MAGTF concept and its ability to reinforce international and national military forces occurred when Iraq annexed Kuwait, a separate state, through a strong military blitzkrieg. This action proved that Iraq's military dominance of the region was a major concern for other independent states. Saudi Arabia was the next state that Iraq threatened to attack.

This threat was acted upon by the U.S. government through diplomatic means as well as military. The MAGTF's concept enabled the U.S. government to rapidly employ Marine forces in Saudi Arabia. The naval task force provided the tactical and logistical support required while the Marine forces were established ashore. In addition, the Maritime pre-positioned ships (MPS), with the MAGTF's equipment and 30 days of sustainment, were able to off load all their cargo. It included the unit's heavy armament (M60A3 and M1A1 tanks),

artillery and other support equipment. This was the first time that the MPS concept had been used in a hostile environment. Because of its effectiveness, the MAGTF was the first heavy force employed and positioned in Saudi Arabia.⁷⁶

The MAGTF's rapid response capability enabled the U.S. government to enforce its foreign policies and to defend an ally, Saudi Arabia. Besides reinforcing an international military, the MAGTF has also been able to reinforce a national force, the U.S. Army. Once CINCCENT arrived in country, he combined his forces. As part of a combined force, the MAGTF definitely added a greater depth to this joint multinational force because of its unique capabilities.

Tactical recovery of aircraft, equipment, and personnel (TRAP) is another mission that the MAGTF, with some limitations, has the capability of handling. Marine Corps doctrine defines TRAP as follows:

"...to tactically rescue or extract downed aircraft, equipment, and personnel in a hostile environment. Elements of the MAGTF enter the objective area by air or surface means in a clandestine manner to recover or extract the personnel or equipment."⁷⁷

The special purpose forces, the smallest form of a MAGTF, is task organized to conduct such specific missions as TRAP. When this Marine force is combined with a specialized Navy team (Seals) its capabilities are greatly enhanced (air, land, and sea). This combined team is called the "Maritime Special Purpose Forces". They have the highly trained and skilled personnel to conduct clandestine operations in a hostile environment; however, there are some capability fluctuations. When integrated with a large MAGTF, such as

a MEU, or MEF, their mission capability increases accordingly. For example, "a MEU(SOC) has adequate C⁴I² (command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, and information) support and range commensurate with that of a reinforced medium helicopter squadron. Its maritime special purpose force (MSPF) strike unit can cover only one target area. Each target area normally requires one strike unit. A MEF, on the other hand, has sustainability and substantial C⁴I² support (i.e., the entire surveillance, reconnaissance, and intelligence group). Its range is commensurate with the maximum capability of an aircraft wing and has enough trained MSPF assets to cover multiple targets."73

The last operation response in peacetime contingency operations is the "in-extremis hostage rescue". This type of operation also relies heavily on the MSPF. Doctrine has defined this kind of operation as follows:

"... are conducted by Navy-Marine elements of the ATF and MAGTF, called Maritime Special Purpose Forces (MSPF). The MSPF is generally composed of a command group; a covering unit of one or more infantry companies; and assault unit of SEALs and reconnaissance Marines, organized to conduct on-scene command, reconnaissance, security, assault, and support functions; and an aviation support unit to provide assault support, close-in fire support, and close air support."74

Counterterrorist operations is the second and last sub-category in limited objective operations. In these types of operations, the MAGTF will usually provide support to a national-level team which has been specially trained to handle counterterrorist operations. This does not mean that the deployed MAGTF does not have the capability to affect some aspect of counterterrorist operations. It is still a

tactical force that can rapidly provide the National Command Authorities (NCA) with a highly mobile force that is extremely capable of conducting amphibious raids (in support of national-level teams, to rescue personnel and/or equipment, or against terrorist groups).

There are three factors that the MAGTF commander must take into consideration before planning and conducting an amphibious raid against terrorism: 1) the location of the raid, 2) type and strength of opponent, and 3) degree of force that will be authorized and/or required.

If the location of the raid is to take place within a foreign country, then the Chief of the Diplomatic Mission will be responsible for ensuring that all U.S. interests are taken into consideration and will be the only point of contact for communications with the host country. If this host country does allow the MAGTF tactical permission to deal with a terrorist incident, it will have to come through this diplomatic channel. However, either the host country or the NCA can place rules of engagement on the MAGTF for the purposes of minimizing the civilian/collateral damage. If this occurs, it will be extremely important for the MAGTF commander to know the strength of the terrorist group. If the rules of engagement are too restrictive or too limited as to hinder the accomplishment of the mission, then they need to be addressed up the chain of command.

CONCLUSION

The MAGTF has a long record in dealing with low-intensity conflict. In the last fifty years, while the majority of the armed forces in the U.S. were aligning their efforts and strategy toward the Soviet threat, the Marine Corps was extensively involved in the low-intensity environment. But now that the Warsaw Pact has collapsed, the large conventional armies of Central Eastern Europe are no longer an immediate threat. The political and senior military leaders have re-evaluated the world situation and are realigning the priorities of the United States' and its military forces. They have now elevated low-intensity conflicts to a higher priority. The strategists are now addressing the volatile Third World spectrum and the conflicts it can produce.

These unforeseeable events have required some of the senior leadership within the armed forces to broaden, and in some cases, change their strategic vision. Plans are being drawn up to reduce the number of large conventional forces on active duty. The perception is that these forces are not, in most cases, as effective as the lighter units in rapidly responding to the low intensity threats of today. That is why the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) is being analyzed by many leaders and considered a viable force to handle these types of conflicts. It has a versatile structure that is rapidly deployable and employable either by sea or air.

Mobilization and deployment of our forces is a key concern. The Marine Corps Maritime Preposition Ships program enhances the MAGTF's

capabilities to rapidly mobilize. This program is presently being scrutinized to see if it is affordable for use by other services. It offers the deploying forces the opportunity to position their heavier equipment and days of supply in key locations so that they can be rapidly employed with the unit. This gives the unit more fire power and sustainability to accomplish the mission.

The Marine Corps with its MAGTF and MPS concepts has helped to revolutionize the military capabilities of rapidly responding to low-intensity conflicts. Even in this time of constraints and reductions, it stands ready to provide the United States government with the means with which to quickly protect her interests and citizens abroad.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The Marine Corps is getting smaller. The financial and organizational reductions have already been approved by Congress. They will be the driving factor on the probable operational center of gravity in developing the newer, smaller and just as capable MAGTFs. To remain mission ready, the MAGTFs will have to be maintained with their current capabilities. This is feasible and can be done even with the reductions. The initial starting point should be to eliminate all the internal and external duplications of efforts within the MAGTF and the Marine Corps.

Internally, the Marine Corps needs to seriously look at the organizational structure and capabilities within each of the four elements of the MAGTF. There are duplications presently built into the authorization tables (equipment and personnel) of at least three of the four elements. In this time of budget reductions and reduced force levels, these extra personnel billets and pieces of equipment will have to be identified and deleted. This has to be done because of the limited number of personnel that will be available in the future to fill the key line numbers within the MAGTF. The extra equipment will only increase the need for more qualified personnel and the MAGTF cannot afford these kinds of luxuries.

Duplications in personnel and equipment can only mean that individual missions are being assigned to one element when in actuality they have already been assigned to another. This definitely has a major impact on the deployed elements and their strength. These

fudge factors will help the deployed units. They will have more assets than is needed for their capability requirements. However, those elements that are not deployed will feel the results because the personnel and equipment will come out of their organizational structure. This means that their capability to deploy as part of a MAGTF will be limited because of these constraints. In total, this will reduce the number of deployable MAGTF's within the Marine Corps structure.

Overextending the few good Marines that are still serving proudly is not the solution. The "tooth to tail" ratio is possibly one of the major keys in solving this situation. Centralizing the combat and combat service support into the CSSE elements could be the key to maintaining a lot of the MAGTF capabilities for the future. This would purge the MAGTF of many of the inefficient waste of assets and capabilities that presently exist within the system.

Externally, the Marine Corps has to be careful about duplicating efforts of other services just as other services have to be careful not to create capabilities that are resident within the MAGTF. The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1987 streamlined a large portion of the organizational structures within the Department of Defense. This was done to make military operational capabilities more accessible and responsive within a joint arena. One of the reasons this act was initiated was due to the service parochialism that existed. It was an attempt to eliminate the old conventional way of thinking and doing business. Additionally, it was intended to minimize the dual capabilities and missions among the services.

One point in case is the MAGTF's use of the Civil Affairs Group which is part of the reserve component. This group provides an array of experts in law, refugee placement, liaison coordination, civil affairs, medical services, and interpreter (two per group) capabilities. Each one of these areas is essential in successfully dealing with low-intensity conflicts, in particular stability operations. Their expertise provides the depth that the MAGTF needs to accomplish its low-intensity mission.

In some of these areas the Marine Corps has a solid base to draw from, but in other areas it is still trying to develop a better or larger capability. As an example, the interpreter capability is one of these areas. For years only four selectees were chosen to attend the Army's Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program. Presently there are plans to increase the number of individuals who will be chosen to attend. The question now is can the Marine Corps and the MAGTF structure afford the time and personnel loss?

The purpose of the FAO program is to provide the MAGTF with enough trained interpreters to cover the four different regions (China, the Mideast, the Soviet Union, and Latin America). It takes at a minimum one year of academic study and one year of field work before an interpreter is considered qualified. Then it takes them a lifetime of exposure and study to become a regional expert.

With the budget cuts and force reductions, the Marine Corps either has to step into this program with the vigor it needs or scale it back and depend upon our brothers in arms, the U.S. Army for

future interpreter support. They have the premier program of all the services and the best track record in providing a quality product.

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